УДК 378.147

Abidullah

THE EFFECTS OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS AND COURSE DESIGN ON GRADUATES' EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Abstract

The degree is no longer enough, competition is increasing day by day among new applicants who are searching for the jobs. Every company needs well knowledgeable and skillful workforce. Some employers especially looking for technical experts and organizational experienced employees in the current competitive and technological market. The overload graduates' availability in the market made it easy for the companies to select the cream from the large pool of candidates. This situation made the chances of getting job more difficult for those students who are just earning degrees in traditional way without any experience and technical expertise. A lot of work has been done in literature regarding this issue how to made it possible for the graduates to be employable in the market. The researchers in the literature mostly focused on the requirements of the jobs available in the markets and the applicants' suitability for that jobs. This paper presents an attempt to explains the impact of internship programs and course design on students' employability skills. The findings may increase the chances of selection easy in getting jobs for graduates and additional information to universities in preparing students according to the requirements of the job markets.

Key words: Internship programs; course design; employability skills; University graduates.

Internship program and employability. It is a big challenge for universities to change their traditional way of education and bring changes according to availability of jobs in the market. They need to match the employability skills of graduates with market demand [8, p. 286-295]. The students after work placement during education were found more skillful in students and employers' perspective as compare to those in the same program of study [6, p. 89-108]. Internship program during study provide opportunity to university students to practice and implement the classroom learnt knowledge and skills in practical environment [3, p.202-217]. Entering organizational environment during internship not only increase the confidence of employability in students, but also increase their knowledge and skills. During their internship in organization, they practice the classroom theoretical knowledge in that environment [7, p. 19-29]. Work-based learning not only increase the subject-specific knowledge but also increase the interpersonal, intercultural and intrapersonal skills [5, p. 1045-1049].

Course design and employability. The educators should update the courses according to the market jobs requirements to prepare graduates before entering the market to search jobs [4, p. 205-215]. Every employer is searching for the matching skills and experiences to fill the vacancies with suitable candidates [1, p. 120-129]. Employs needs specific skills to perform a job in organizations, which they mostly acquire from the courses offered by the university where they studied [2, p. 558-564]. The competencies of students were found positively both by faculty members of the university and industrial supervisors after practical experience [2, p. 245-249].

Conclusion. This theoretical article is an attempt to bring the attention of education policy makers and the universities top management to certain issues which is necessary for the employability of future graduates. Technology brought eye-opening changes in 21st Century, which compels stakeholders on changes and innovations. The same changes also occurred in the organizations which pickup graduates from the labor market to fill the available vacancies. The employers always take those applicants which meets the needs of their requirements. Now universities need to think about this which kind of graduates they should send to the market. If the graduates will not meet the requirements of available demand in the market, it will not only increase unemployment in the market but also will discourage the upcoming graduates. The selected two variables from the literature gap may provide a picture to the policy makers and educators to focus on certain factors of employability to overcome this problem.

The first selected variable was internship program which may increase the skills of students during their practical experience in the organization. Internship programs will increase their interpersonal, intrapersonal, communication and leadership skills. It will also increase their confidence on the degree which they are getting that it is applicable practically in the market. Internship programs will provide opportunity for relationship bridge between universities and industry to play role in society. This connection will provide information to universities about the required skills which they should to teach their graduates to made them employed.

The second variable was course design which also is an important factor to be focus. Most of the universities are teaching the traditional courses which were applicable in the past but does not meet the challenges in the current labor market. This is also a problem students are facing when they enter the labor market. The courses they studied does not match the job requirement. Educators need a proper course design system to evaluate the industry demand for labor skills, and design the courses according to the demand.

Focusing on demanded skills and experiences from employers, universities may increase the employability of students by offering them internship programs and updated courses matching the labor market.

Limitations and future research. This article is a theoretical attempt to explain the gap found in literature which required empirical attempt for broader academic implication. However, this work will provide a picture to a certain university or geographical area. It will be useful to collect data from employers, students and faculty members of the university to investigate.

Bibliography

1. Junek O., Lockstone L., Mair J. Two Perspective on Event Management Employment: Student and Employers Insight Into The Skills Required to Get the Job Done! // Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management. 2009. Vol.16. No. 1. Pp 120-129.

2. Jainudin NA., Francis L., Tawie R., Matarul J. Competency of Civil Engineering Students Undergone Industrial Training: Supervisors perspectives // Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences. 2015. Vol.167, Pp 245-249. WOS:000361493500035.

3. Khalil OEM. Students experiences with business internship program at Kuwait university // The International Journal of Management Education. 2015. Vol.13. No. 2. Pp 202-217.

4. Lozano R., Ceulemans K., Seatter CS. Teaching organizational change management for sustainability: designing and delivering a course at the university of Leeds to better prepare future sustainability change agents // Journal of Cleaner Production. 2015. Vol.106, Pp 205-215.

5. Moise IA., Popescu T., Kadar M., Muntean M. Developing Students educational experiences through work-based learning programs // The 3rd world conference on Learning, Teaching and Educational Leadership. Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences. 2013. Vol. 93. Pp 1045-1049. WOS:000342763100184.

6. Paisey C., Paisey NJ. Developing skills via work placements in accounting: Students and employers views // Accounting forum. 2010. Vol. 34. No. 2. Pp 89-108.

7. Stansbie P., Nash R., Chang S. Linking internship and classroom learning: A case study examination of hospitality and tourism management students // Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports and Tourism Education. 2016. Vol.19. Pp 19-29. WOS:000388435700003.

8. Teijeiro M., Rungo P., Freire MJ. Graduates competencies and employability: The impact of matching firms needs and personal attainments // Economics of Education Review. 2013. Vol.34. Pp 286-295. WOS:000320417800021.

9. Zainal K., Hassan WZW., Alias J. Generic skills level of UKM students after pursuing the compulsory general studies courses // Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences. 2012. Vol. 59. Pp. 558-564. WOS:000324127500077.

УДК 332.05

S. Polbitsyn

THE MULTIFUNCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL LOCALITIES

Abstract

The suggested model of multifunctional development can be considered suitable for rural localities of a northern region, since the principles which this model is based on are fundamental for any industrial region. The expected outcome, after the realization of the model, is an increase in food security and an improvement of living standards for the rural population. To achieve this, the following principles of local administration should be realized:

The first principle is that the multifunctional development must consider the interests of all social groups of the given industrial region, and it must be aimed at increasing the public welfare of all groups. Secondly, the model must be targeted at the development of the specific advantageous features of the agricultural producers of region, but not at the expense of competition with external producers. The third principle is that, rather than focusing on changes in benchmarks for the development of rural localities, the local administration should strengthen the economic growth by improving food quality for the population.

The fourth principle is that the model develops not only the economic potential of the rural localities but, primarily, social growth. The model points out the importance of the multifunctional development of rural localities, which, in turn, is bound to affect the standards of living in the rural localities. This model of a regional model of multifunctional development was introduced to the local governments, and it was found to be promising as a mandatory part of the regional innovative development program.

Keywords: social and economic development, multifunctional model, rural localities, entrepreneurship, innovation.

Many of rural communities were destroyed in Russia during the Soviet period, rural inhabitants were pressed to work only in agriculture, and today the major problem for rural communities and economy is its monofuctionality, the traditionalist approach for organization of economy, business and social life, that cause obstacles for rural social development [1,10].

Nowadays, the existing system of food production and rural development in Russia cannot be termed sufficient and productive [2]. Modern requirements of the living standards in rural regions and rural poverty reduction cannot be achieved within the post-Soviet type of rural policy. To reach the goal of improving and to change the declining trends of living standards in rural regions, it is necessary to develop innovative multifunctional model to ensure the priority of social goals over economic development, because providing higher standards of rural livelihood will inevitably lead to sustainable development of rural economy.

Population and economic changes in rural regions, the exploration and development of economic opportunity drift beyond just traditional agriculture. Multifunctional development of communities in rural regions, designed to support the development of new social and sustainable economic opportunities, is esteemed by many researchers to be the unique opportunity and driving force that will generate sustainable regional development and foster economic security. Multifunctional model formation for economic development of communities in rural regions has significant academic importance, serving as foundation for creation of agriinovation system approach, which is called to be agrifood system of the 21th century and practical importance, serving as the foundation for political decisions for regional development.

The concept of multifunctional development of rural regions has become well established both in scientific world and in public administrations. Despite the deep attention to the problems rural social and economic systems development there is no consistent model of multifunctional rural development that can lead to the solution of this problem.

The research starts from the methodological objective of increasing the visibility of the multifunctional concept of rural development that should highlight the social and economic potential of rural regions.

The multifunctional model formation is supposed to lead to practical mechanism for implementation of major principles of multifunctional development identified by the research.

A theoretical model of the regional multifunctional development, which will allow to determine the perspectives for innovative development, cannot be built without an analysis of development of the social and economic system in rural regions, especially when it comes to a predominantly northern one, and to our opinion it must be based on the concept of agriinnovation system.

The concept of an agriinnovation system appeared in the early 2000s as a response to food production crises. The initial idea was to develop innovative agro-technologies to improve the competitiveness of small producers in developing countries [9]. This concept was supported by the World Bank (2006, 2009) in numerous publications.

Further, researchers paid more attention to the essential institutional changes of agrifood systems as the basis for adoption of innovative systems [5].

Another point of view focuses not on food production, but on food consumption. The transformation of an agrifood system must provide consumers with food of required quality and keep them better informed about it [6].

Considering the experience of different countries that were trying to modify their agrifood systems, we have to mention the innovative development of agricultural systems in the new member states of the European Union [3].

The innovative model of a regional agrifood system has to be closely related to the climatic conditions of the region in question and to its historically-developed way of life and human activity; therefore, it should rely not only on agricultural traditions but also on those of food consumption [11].

Therefore, historical knowledge is not only essential to understand the territorial model of agriculture, and to forecast its development; it is also an important component in the management of the territorial development, particularly in the sphere of regional food security [8].

The significance of the exploration of multifunctional models is proved by the necessity of research of community economic development in rural regions, spatial innovative development aiming theoretical explanations of trends and threats of rural development. It is proved by many researches based on analysis in rural development in different countries in various geographic regions that traditional agricultural profile of rural economy has no sufficient potential to increase living standards of rural population. The contemporary approach to solution of this problem is based on formation of special innovative models implementing different types of economic activities for population providing living standards comparable to urban ones.

Multifunctional model is considered as a tool for adoption of agriinovation system concept and is based on balanced approach to food security and rural development.

The suggested model can be considered suitable for the agro-innovation system of an industrial northern region, since the principles which this model is based on are fundamental for any industrial region.

The expected outcome, after the realization of the agro-innovation model, is an increase in food security and an improvement of living standards for the rural population. To achieve this, the following principles should be realized:

The first principle is that the agro-innovation system must consider the interests of all social groups of the given industrial region, and it should be aimed at increasing the public welfare of all groups.

Secondly, the model must be targeted at the development of the specific advantageous features of the agricultural producers of Sverdlovsk region, but not at the expense of competition with external producers.

The third principle is that, rather than focusing on changes in benchmarks for the development of Sverdlovskaya Oblast, the model should strengthen the economic growth of the region by improving food quality for the population.

The fourth principle is that the model develops not only the economic potential of the rural territories but, primarily, social growth. The model points out the importance of the multifunctional

development of rural localities, which, in turn, is bound to affect the standards of living in the rural localities in Sverdlovskaya Oblast.

This model of a regional agro-innovation system was introduced to the local government, and it was found to be promising as a mandatory part of the regional innovative development program.The weakness of the suggested model is a possible lack of political initiative on the part of local authorities [4]. The current political system in Russia does not give sufficient power to municipal administrations. To implement this model municipal administrations are required to take political responsibility for the level of living standards and food security of the population.

Increase in migration to rural localities, stimulated by creating jobs in agrifood enterprises, and the creation of a favorable rural community, will lead to long-term stable regional economic development [7]. Thus, the agrifood system model developed for Sverdlovskaya Oblast meets the basic requirements for a model of an agro-innovation system of industrial regions and can be applied in other northern industrial regions of the Russian Federation.

The research results revealed a deteriorating trend in agricultural production and rural social development in Sverdlovskaya Oblast. To reach the goal of maintaining regional food security and to address the issue of the downward trend in food production it is necessary to ensure the priority of social goals over economic development. Providing higher standards of rural livelihood will inevitably lead to the sustainable development of agricultural production. Our study determined the conceptual foundations of sustainable development of rural localities of the Russian industrial regions, to be accomplished through the creation of decent living conditions and the participation of the rural population in quality food production. Particular attention is given to the mechanism of interaction and coordination among federal and regional governments, local governments and commercial organizations engaged in food production in rural areas. On the basis of the described theoretical propositions, the conceptual model of the innovative development of rural areas in an industrial region, namely Sverdlovskaya Oblast, aimed at quality food production for the population of region, is presented.

The results show that despite a highly centralized economic policy in the Russian Federation, regional food security and rural development can be achieved by encouraging municipal authorities and entrepreneurs to take on a more responsible and active role.

To ensure the entrepreneurial activities of rural producers, the regional government is encouraged to transform the regional agrifood system into an agro-innovation system, with information systems at its core.

A question for further research of the concept of agriinnovation systems as an aid to improve the rural development and the food supply for the population of northern regions of Russia depends on the availability of further reliable statistical data on agricultural production and food consumption in different regions of the country.

Bibliography

1. Glass, Gary D., and David J. O'Brien. The Role of Household Social Organization in the Structure of Rural Economies: Comparing Forest Resource Dependent and Agriculturally Dependent Regions in Russia // Rural Sociology. 2016. Vol. 81. No. 4. Pp. 635-54. DOI:10.1111/ruso.12109.

2. Goldman M. I. Lost Opportunity: Why Economic Reforms in Russia Have Not Worked // New York – London: W.W. Norton &Company: 320 p.

3. Horlings L. G., Marsden T. K. Exploring the 'New Rural Paradigm' in Europe: eco-economic strategies as a counterforce to the global competitiveness agenda // European Urban and Regional Studies. 2012. Vol. 21. No. 1. Pp. 4-20. DOI: 10.1177/0969776412441934.

4. Stuvøy K. Power and Public Chambers in the development of civil society in Russia // Communist and Post-Communist Studies. 2014. Vol. 47. No. 3–4. Pp. 409-419.

5. Klerkx L., Aarts N., Leeuwis C. Adaptive management in agricultural innovation systems: The interactions between innovation networks and their environment // Agricultural Systems. 2010. Vol. 103. No. 6. Pp. 390-400

6. Wognum P.M.N, Bremmers H.,. Trienekens J. H, Jack G.A.J. van der Vorst, Bloemhof J. M.. Systems for sustainability and transparency of food supply chains – Current status and challenges // Advanced Engineering Informatics. 2011. Vol. 25. No. 1. Pp. 65-76.

7. Shubin S. The changing nature of rurality and rural studies in Russia // Journal of Rural Studies. 2006. Vol. 22. No. 4. Pp. 422-440.

8. Herzfeld T., Huffman S., Rizov M. The dynamics of food, alcohol and cigarette consumption in Russia during transition // Economics & Human Biology. 2014. Vol. 13. Pp. 128-143.

9. Temel T., Janssen W., Karimov F. Systems analysis by graph theoretical techniques: assessment of the agricultural innovation system of Azerbaijan // Agricultural Systems. 2003. Vol. 77. No. 2. Pp. 91-116.

10. Wegren, Stephen K., Valery V. Patsiorkovsky, and David J. O'Brien. Rural Reform and the Gender Gap in Post-Soviet Russia // Slavic Review. 2010. Vol. 69. No. 1. Pp. 65-92. DOI:10.1017/s0037677900016703.

11. Zalivcheva O. Food consumption regional differentiation // Regional Agrosystems: Economics and Sociology. 1. Retrieved from: http://iagpran.ru/journal.php?tid=309.